Magazine of Majlis Ansarullah UK

ANSARUDDIN

March/ April 2020 | Aman/Shahadt 1398HS | Rajab/Shaban 1441AH | Vol. 17 No. 2



"Goodness lies in coming unto me with sincerity;
There are beasts all around I am the fort of peace."

The Promised Messiah as

Guidance of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V ايده الله تعالى بنصره العزيز ON COVID-19

1. Follow governmental guidelines and directives.

2. Offer congregation prayers and Jummah prayers at home (if mosque gatherings not permitted).

3. Elderly should take extra care and stay at home.

4. Both adults and children should get proper sleep at night.

5. Limit eating junk food, especially those with preservatives like crisps.

6. Drink plenty of water during the day, taking multiple sips throughout the day.

7. Keep your hands clean, wash them thoroughly with soap or use sanitizer.

8. Performing proper ablution (Wudhu) five times a day will help keep you clean.

9. Cover your sneeze with a tissue or sneeze into your elbow.

10. Our final recourse is prayer. Pray that you are protected. Pray for Ahmadis who have this virus. Pray for all the ill. Pray that Allah may protect the world, and pray that every Ahmadi becomes more firm in faith.

(Based on Friday Sermon delivered on March 20, 2020)

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

ANSARUDDIN

Majlis Ansarullah UK

PLEDGE

اَشْھَدُ اَنْ لَّا اِلٰہَ اِلَّا اللّٰہُ وَحْدَہٗ لَا شَرِیْکَ لَہٗ

وَاَشْھَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُہٗ وَرَسُوْلُہٗ

I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah. He is One (and) has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and messenger.

I solemnly pledge that I shall endeavour throughout my life for the propagation and consolidation of Islam Ahmadiyyat, and for upholding the institution of Khilafat. I shall also be prepared to offer the greatest sacrifice for this cause. Moreover, I shall exhort my children to always remain dedicated and devoted to Khilafat. Insha'allah.

Sadr Majlis Ansarullah UK
Dr Ch. Ijaz Ur Rehman

Qaid Isha'at
Naeem Gulzar

Editor
Zia Ul Rehman

Assistant Editor
Dr Asim Mumtaz Malik

Design & Layout
Aamir Ahmad Malik

Web Design
Asif Javed

Cover Photos
Mirza Labeed Ahmad

Published by
Qiadat Isha'at Majlis Ansarullah UK
33 Gressenhall Road,
London,
SW18 5QH,
United Kingdom

Tel : 020 8874 6630
Fax : 020 8870 9379
Email : ansaruddin@ansar.org.uk
Web : ansaruddin.ansar.org.uk

@Ansaruddin_UK

CONTENTS

Holy Qur'an

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ﴿۱﴾

یٰبَنِیۡۤ اٰدَمَ قَدۡ اَنۡزَلۡنَا عَلَیۡکُمۡ لِبَاسًا یُّوَارِیۡ سَوۡاٰتِکُمۡ وَ رِیۡشًا ؕ
وَ لِبَاسُ التَّقۡوٰی ۙ ذٰلِکَ خَیۡرٌ ؕ ذٰلِکَ مِنۡ اٰیٰتِ اللّٰہِ لَعَلَّہُمۡ یَذَّکَّرُوۡنَ ﴿۲۷﴾
یٰبَنِیۡۤ اٰدَمَ لَا یَفۡتِنَنَّکُمُ الشَّیۡطٰنُ کَمَاۤ اَخۡرَجَ اَبَوَیۡکُمۡ مِّنَ الۡجَنَّۃِ یَنۡزِعُ
عَنۡہُمَا لِبَاسَہُمَا لِیُرِیَہُمَا سَوۡاٰتِہِمَا ؕ اِنَّہٗ یَرٰىکُمۡ ہُوَ وَ قَبِیۡلُہٗ مِنۡ
حَیۡثُ لَا تَرَوۡنَہُمۡ ؕ اِنَّا جَعَلۡنَا الشَّیٰطِیۡنَ اَوۡلِیَآءَ لِلَّذِیۡنَ لَا یُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ ﴿۲۸﴾

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
O children of Adam! We have indeed sent down to you raiment to cover your shame, and to be an elegant dress; but the raiment of righteousness — that is the best. That is one of the Signs of Allah, that they may remember.
O children of Adam! let not Satan seduce you, even as he turned your parents out of the garden, stripping them of their raiment that he might show them their shame. Truly he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you see them not. Surely, We have made satans friends for those who believe not.

[Surah Al-Araf, 7: 27-28]

Hadith

Hazrat Abu Hurairah رضی اللہ عنہ narrates that the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم peace and blessings of Allah be upon him said:

"Allah does not see towards your shapes and your wealth, but He sees towards your hearts and your actions."

(Muslim)



SUCCESS OF BELIEVER

You must always keep this principle in view that the success that is achieved by a Believer makes him shy of it. He praises God for this Grace of His. That makes him move forward in the realm of spirituality and in the face of every trial he remains steadfast.

Apparently the success of a Believer and that of a Disbeliever are similar to each other. But you should remember that the success of a Disbeliever takes him onto the path of error while the success of a Believer opens the door of God's Bliss for him. The reason why the success of the Disbeliever leads him onto the path of error is that he does not turn to God; he makes his struggle, wisdom and capability, his God. On the other hand, the Believer turns to God and gets a closer relationship with Him. Thus every success enables him to start a new affair with God - an affair of relationship.

That begins a process of change in him. Innallaha maallazeenattaqau, God is with the people who adopt righteousness.

It should be remembered that the word Taqwa appears in the Holy Quran many a time. In every place where this word occurs its interpretation and its significance is linked with the word that precedes it. Here the word Ma-a precedes it. Thus, it means that whoever gives preference to God is given preference by God and is guarded against every kind of humiliation in this world.

I very strongly believe that if a man wishes to be protected from all sorts of humiliations and hardships, he should adopt righteousness. If he does that, he will not feel short of anything.
In short, the success of a Believer takes him forward; he does not halt there - at one place.
[Malfoozat Vol. I, p. 149]

Taqwa (Righteousness)

Friday Sermon by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (may Allah be his Helper)

Khalifatul-Masih V, delivered on 6th March 2015 at the BaitulFutūh Mosque, Morden, London



'O ye who believe! fear Allah; and let every soul look to what it sends forth for the morrow. And fear Allah; verily Allah is Well-Aware of what you do.

And be not like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget themselves. It is they that are the rebellious.' (59:19-20)

Generally speaking the root cause of every badness or sin lies in not making any effort to avoid it by considering such action unnecessary, although this very carelessness leads to bigger sins. Man gradually forgets virtues and the standards that are expected of a believer. Fear of God diminishes and one's belief in the Hereafter also weakens. In practice one becomes distant from the requisites of faith. The aforementioned Quranic verses draw attention to this subject. One is reminded not to merely be concerned with the interests, comforts and connections of this world. One's main concern should be the afterlife, one's level of faith and adopting righteousness. Accountability in the Hereafter should be pivotal to one's concerns and this alone will lead to true moral development. One will progress spiritually when one will be conscious of what one sends forth for the morrow.

Elucidating verse 59:19 the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) wrote: 'O those who believe, fear God and each one of you should look to what it has sent forth for the Hereafter. And fear God Who is Well-Aware and All-Knowing and looks at your practices. That is, He knows and distinguishes very well and thus will never accept your defective practices.' (Tafseer by the Promised Messiah, Vol. IV, p. 338)

This needs to be understood and appreciated. One should abide by righteousness and keep an eye on one's practices and keep those matters in view which will adorn one's morrow and not consider this world as everything as non-believers do.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I (may Allah be pleased with him) said that God has given us a principle to succeed in this world and the next and that is to be concerned for the next life. This principle adorns one's life in this world as well as the next world. In order to prepare for the Hereafter one has to start here and now.

The aforementioned verse 59:19 is one of the

Quranic verses recited at the time of nikah. It is the last of the verses of nikah sermon. In the nikah sermon God draws attention to many aspects; to care for familial relations, to adopt honesty enabling one to practice virtues and fulfil relationship dues, to adopt commandments of God and His Messenger and furthermore emphasis is given that if one keeps the next life in view one will also have commandments of God and His Messenger in view.

There are numerous commandments of God and His Messenger which help make family/married life most pleasant. One's family life in this world becomes paradise-like as well as one also hopes to get blessings in the next life owing to one's good practices. This is not limited to one's own self. Rather the blessings are far-reaching and one's children also become recipients.

If families that ruin their home lives over small, trivial matters reflected on commandments of God and also practised them, not only would they be guarantors of peaceful family life they would also be adorning the future of their children. Families that are ruining their homes over trivial worldly matters should reflect and ponder over this. Your next generation does not only belong to you, it is also an asset of the Jama'at and the nation. It is the responsibility of the parents to show their children the right way and this can only be possible when the parents follow the commandments of God and His Messenger. God has drawn the attention of every believer to this aspect.

There are numerous occasions in our lives when we do not abide by righteousness and do not keep the Hereafter in view. Imperceptibly we give preference to worldly supports over God's support. Due to our ineptitude and failings we ruin our future in this world and also disregard the next life.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih (may Allah be pleased with him) said that a believer should first think of the consequences of any task that he embarks upon. When enraged man is given to murderous tendencies and is also verbally abusive. But he should reflect over the consequences of this conduct. Reflecting over the consequences will lead him to abide by righteousness. All badness or evil stems from the fact that we have Satan in our thoughts/mind and we do whatever we do without giving any thought to the consequences of the matter. Here, the reference is not to those who are habitual in wrongdoing or those who have no control over their actions. Rather, here those people are meant who claim to have faith.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I (may Allah be pleased with him) said that one should have faith that God is watching over whatever one does. If man believes that the one who rules over/governs him is all-knowing and all-aware who watches over every kind of wickedness, ineptitude and sloth and would punish, man can avoid punishment by taking due action. This is the kind of faith one should instil. If one does not undertake tasks with probity even in worldly matters one's earnings are not acceptable and above-board. The verse (59:19) drawing attention to one's morrow has great extensive meanings and significance.

We need to instil the belief that God watches every act of ours and we also need to instil the belief that every kind of deception, no matter how insignificant we may consider it to be, or any sloth or indolence on our part is not liked by God.

By asking believers to look for what one sends for the morrow God has commanded us to abide by righteousness in family matters, in business matters to matters of national and international scope. Man may think that worldly matters have no connection with faith but a believer is asked to abide by righteousness. At times people take certain steps in order to avoid worldly loss but it should be remembered that any step that is advantageous through deception distances one from faith and belief. And gradually one drifts away from religion and God. Thus one should have in view the consequence of everything one does as God watches over everything that we do. For this purpose one does not need to look at any questionnaire/form of one of the auxiliary organisations. In fact we should hold ourselves accountable on a personal level. If we do something with good intention and do it to seek the pleasure of God then we have the promise of multiple rewards from God. If our intention behind doing something is not so good we should be aware that we can come under Divine chastisement. If everyone fulfils their obligations with these thoughts the general level of righteousness in the Jama'at will enhance and it will be evident for all to see. Neither the department of Tarbiyyat will be involved in this not the office of Amoore Aama or any other department. Thus we should continuously look into ourselves and make endeavours to safeguard ourselves against satanic attacks.

Indeed, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said that Satan flows in the veins of every person like blood adding that the Satan in his blood stream had become Muslim.

When we are unwell we may catch an infection which enters our blood stream. Initially we are not even aware of the illness and at times even doctors cannot pinpoint an illness that has entered our blood stream and is at an early stage. There are viruses abound as we see these days there is widespread illness. However, the most dangerous ailment these days is spiritual ailment which is rampant. Man does not even know when and how Satan enters the blood stream. At least with physical ailment one feels some symptoms and is alerted and seeks medical help. However, this is not so with spiritual ailment. One's near and dear ones notice signs of spiritual ailment and try and advice one. Those who have reached later stages of spiritual ailment consider the advice of their near and dear ones as erroneous. Indeed satanic attacks and spiritual ailments are far worse and far more dangerous than physical ailments because man is not prepared for the cure. This is why true believers should take precautionary measures before any such attack can take place. We need constant practice and remedy in order to safeguard because spiritual ailments are rampant. We should remember that a true believer is never without fear of God.

When the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) awoke during night he would pray and supplicate with great humility and tenderness of heart. Hazrat 'Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) put it to him that God had indeed granted him forgiveness why then did he supplicate so humbly. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) replied that his salvation was but with the grace of God and he needed to ever turn to God. Now, if someone like the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) practised so much humility

and fear of God, who can say that he is not in need of looking for God's blessings! We need to be constantly alert, we need to constantly abide by righteousness, we need to constantly self-reflect, we need to constantly seek God's mercy and we need to constantly be mindful how to safeguard our faith as explained in verse 59:20. The spiritually ill do not deem themselves as ill. In fact when their sympathisers try and make them better they think it is the sympathisers who are not well. This results in nothing but ruination. Generally speaking man forgets God in three ways. Firstly, those who do not believe in the existence of God and there is a large number of people these days who do not. These people are apparently educated and use the media and the internet to poison the minds of the young and the vulnerable. Secondly, those who do not have true belief in an All-Powerful God. These people do believe in the existence of God as the Creator and believe that the entire cosmos operates with God's power. Thirdly, it is those who are so immersed in worldly matters that they have forgotten God. They may offer Salat or pray when they remember but are not focussed that Salat is obligatory for true believers. Those who forget God ultimately reach a stage of moral and spiritual decline and have no inner peace. They are very prompt in identifying worldly comforts and God makes them forgetful towards Him.

Righteousness demands one to lead life in accordance with the commandments of God and this includes looking at the consequence of everything one embarks upon and having firm belief that God is watching over everything one does.

When Hazrat Khalifatul Masih visited Kenya he met with a politician who related to him that he had also met Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (may Allah have mercy on him) who had advised him something which had proved very beneficial. The advice was to think before doing anything that God is watching you and that He also has a record of everything one does. Perhaps this person was Christian. If he could benefit from this advice, how much more beneficial would the advice be for a true believer who has been enjoined by God to follow it. If one forgets God one is included among the rebellious. The verse makes it very clear that if you do not abide by righteousness, are not concerned about your next life and do not follow God's commandments you will be among the rebellious. And the rebellious are those who break the limits set by God, who are embroiled in sins, who are flagrant about obedience and who are distant from honesty. It is a cause for great concern if we do not self-reflect.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I (may Allah be pleased with him) said do not be like those people who abandon the Fountain-head of all purity that Holy God is and wish to succeed through mischievous plans and scheming. Indeed, man is faced with many problems in life but the glory of a righteous person is in never letting any perversion enter in his connection with God. We should never let go of our connection with God Who does not separate from us in life and in death.

View recording of this Friday Sermon via MTA online



Promised Messiah عليه السلام's Love for the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

Azhar Goraya



Love is one of the strongest emotions people can experience. Islam is a religion that is built upon human nature, and has directed us in the proper use of all of our faculties and emotions, including love. Primarily, Islam is a religion of love. That may surprise some people as it is usually Christianity that emphasizes its association with love. But it is Islam that teaches us to love both Allāh and human beings, and to practically show that love by fulfilling the rights of both, to an extent that is not found in other religions. Expanding on this principle, the Holy Qur'an has not only required us to obey the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), but also love him sincerely. The Holy Qur'an states:

قُلْ اِنْ كَانَ اٰبَآؤُكُمْ وَ اَبْنَآؤُكُمْ وَ اِخْوَانُكُمْ وَ اَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَ عَشِيْرَتُكُمْ
وَ اَمْوَالُ ۣ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوْهَا وَ تِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَ مَسٰكِنُ
تَرْضَوْنَهَآ اَحَبَّ اِلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ رَسُوْلِهٖ وَ جِهَادٍ فِيْ سَبِيْلِهٖ
فَتَرَبَّصُوْا حَتّٰى يَاْتِيَ اللّٰهُ بِاَمْرِهٖ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ

Say, if your fathers, and your sons, and your brethren, and your wives, and your kinsfolk, and the wealth you have acquired, and the trade whose dullness you fear, and the dwellings which you love are dearer to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allāh comes with His judgment; and Allāh guides not the disobedient people. (9:24)

There is a hadith that explains this verse:
Once, a Companion (Ṣaḥābī) approached the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and stated, "O messenger of Allāh, I love you." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) replied, "How much do you love me?" The Ṣaḥābī replied, "As much as I love my children." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) replied, "Then you are not a believer. More love than this is required for faith." The Ṣaḥābī stated, "O messenger of Allāh! I love you as much as I love myself." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) remarked, "Even now you cannot be a believer. Because more love than this is required for faith." The Ṣaḥābī then stated, "O messenger of Allāh! I love you more than my life, my wealth my wife and my children!" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) then stated; "Now you are a believer." (Anwār-ul- 'Ulūm, vol. 23, p. 157)

This level of love was practically demonstrated by the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). They were abused and ridiculed, driven out of their homes and ostracized by friends and families for their faith. Yet never did they prefer any worldly connection to the spiritual connection of love and fidelity that they had with their holy master Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

An example of love is also found in the life of Hadrat Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him). He left his home and migrated to Medina from Mecca with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). He stayed with

him through every trial from the first day of his prophethood. When news arrived of the death of his beloved master, Hadrat Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) was outside of Medina. He went straight to the mosque without speaking to anybody. When he reached his body, he raised the sheet covering his blessed face, kissed him on the forehead and said:

My father and my mother be sacrificed for you, O Allāh's Prophet! Allāh will not combine two deaths on you. You have died the death that was written for you. (Bukhārī, Chapter on Funerals)

The depth of their devotion moves us even today; 1400 years after their bodies have been laid to rest. However, it is the practice of Allāh that he leaves no era of Islam without a living example to follow. And we are blessed that we are in an age that has seen the advent of the greatest of all reformers, Messiah and Mahdi, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qādiāni (may peace be upon him). He has shown us what it truly means to love the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). God Himself bore witness to the love the Promised Messiah harbored for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). He states:

"On one occasion, I received a revelation which indicated that there was a difference in opinion among the higher angels. The indication was that the will of God was prepared to bring about a renaissance of Islam, but the angels had not yet been informed of the identity of the rejuvenator. Hence that was being debated. At the same time I saw in a dream that a search was being made for one who should revive the faith. A person appeared before me and pointing to me said:

هَذَا رَجُلٌ يُحِبُّ رَسُولَ اللهِ

This is the man who loves the Messenger (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) of Allāh. His meaning was that the principal condition of this assignment was the love of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and that I fulfilled that condition."

(Barahīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, part 4, p. 503 sub-footnote 3, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, p. 598 sub-footnote 3)(English Translation from Tadhkirah, p. 55)

In many of his writings he made it absolutely clear that he was ever ready to sacrifice his every possession to defend the honor and teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). He wrote at one place:

"Is it not true that in a short while in India alone a hundred thousand people have become Christians, and more than sixty million books have been published in opposition to Islam, and people belonging to high families have lost their religion, and those who used to describe themselves as the descendants of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] have put on the garment of Christianity and have become his enemies, and numberless books full of vile abuse of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) have been published? My heart cries out with tears that if these people had murdered my children before my eyes, and had cut to pieces my sincere friends, and had killed me with great humiliation, and had possessed themselves of all my property, I would not have been so pained and my heart would not have been so hurt as it has been pained and hurt by the insults offered to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]." (Ā'īna-i-Kamālāti-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 51-52) (English Translation from Essence of Islam, p. 320-321)

So great was his love for his Holy master that prose was not enough to convey the depth of his emotion. The Promised Messiah (may peace be

upon him) thus wrote poem after poem, in Arabic, Urdu and Persian conveying the love that he had for Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). He wrote at one place:

بعد از خدا بعشق محمد مخمرم
گر کفر ایں بود بخدا سخت کافرم

"After Allāh, I am intoxicated with the love of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). If this is disbelief, then by Allāh, I am a staunch disbeliever" (Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, Lecture Sialkot, p. 248)

In an Arabic couplet, he expressed his love in the following manner:

تیرے منہ کی ہی قسم میرے پیارے احمد
تیری خاطر ہی یہ سب بار اٹھایا ہم نے

"My heart is completely submersed in the love of the land that Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) tread upon. Alas! I wish that my birth had been in your land!" (Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 7, KaramātuṣṢādiqīn, p. 93)

In Urdu, he wrote further at one place:

تیرے منہ کی ہی قسم میرے پیارے احمد
تیری خاطر ہی یہ سب بار اٹھایا ہم نے

"By your exalted personage my beloved Ahmad, it is for your sake that we have taken up this entire burden" (Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, Ā'īna-i-Kamālāt-i-Islām, p. 225).

The love he had for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) was not limited to his pen—the people around him were eyewitnesses to how his activities and actions shone with the love of his Holy Master (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him).

Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that when the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) would mention the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) in his addresses or in a gathering, he would usually do so in these loving words, that "Our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said such and such." In the same way, in writing he would not just refer to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) by merely saying "He," but he would write the full salutation after it as well, which was "Peace and Blessings of Allāh be Upon Him" (Seerat-ul-Mahdi, Narration #547)

Hadrat Sheikh Yaqoob Ali Irfani (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated that when he went to England in 1925, he desired to visit the priest Dr. White Brakhit as he had remained a missionary in Batala and had met the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) many times. During their conversation, he stated:

"I have observed one thing in Mirza Sahib which I disliked, which was that whenever an objection was made on Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) he would become upset, and his face would show signs of displeasure."

Sheikh Yaqoob Ali Irfani (may Allah be pleased with him) replied:

"Dear Padre! The aspect that you dislike is the very thing that has captured my heart and upon which I am sacrificed"
(Ḥayāt-e-Ahmad, Vol. 1, Part 3, p. 22).

Once, the wife of his cousin Mirza Ghulam Haider uttered a word against the high stature of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Upon this he became so upset that despite all the emotions of love and respect he had for her and his desire for reconciliation between

people, he left the food he was eating at their table and never again returned there for a meal. (Seerat Masīḥ Mau'ūd, vol. 2, p. 270)

In short, whoever came into contact with the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him), whether friend, family or foe, bore witness to the love he had for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). And the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) was not satisfied that not only he harbored love for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) – he had made it his mission to inculcate the love of his Holy Master (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in all those who claimed to follow him. He made it a requirement for anyone who wished to follow him that they daily send Durood on his Holy Master. He wrote in third condition of Bai'at:

That he/she shall regularly offer the five daily Prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) and shall try his/ her best to be regular in offering the Tahajjud and invoking Durood on the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). That he/she shall make it his/her daily routine to ask forgiveness for his/ her sins, to remember the bounties of God and to praise and glorify Him. (Conditions of Bai'at and Responsibilities of an Ahmadi, p. 51)

Our beloved Imam, Hadrat Khalifatul-Masīḥ V (may Allah support him with His mighty help) elaborated on this aspect in the following words:
"According to the commandment of Allāh, it is necessary for a believer to send Durood on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him), without which the standard of love for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) is not completed, nor can they be, which a believer should have for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). No prayer reaches the level of acceptance nor can which is bereft of Durood. But we should also remember that the true purpose of our Durood should be our love for the Holy Prophet (may peace be upon him) and this love should be superior to all other things" (Friday Sermon, 1 February 2013)

May Allāh enable all of us to follow the example of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) and harbor greater love for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him). Amen!

Continuation from Page 23

more truths will reveal themselves. Thus, when carrying out one's research (into these matters) one should keep one's heart clean and pure. The more the heart is purified of prejudice and selfishness the quicker the true meanings will be understood. The difference that exists between light and darkness is understood even by the most ignorant of people. The true thing and the accurate thing is one and the same.

The summary of the whole of my speech, in a word, is this that between two points there is only one straight line. These are matters which are worthy of consideration. You should stay here with patience and steadfastness. By God's grace it is not impossible that you should find the path which has been tried and experienced by millions of holy people and such people still exist.

(The Promised Messiah عليه السلام finished his discourse at this point. The questioner stayed in Qadian for some time and benefited from the company of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام.)

A Letter of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام on the Subject of Ribā (Interest)

Translated by Dr. Lutf ur Rehman

After Bismillah, the Promised Messiah, may peace be upon him, wrote to Mian Ghulam Nabi Sethi, a businessman:

In yesterday's mail, I received your letter. I hope that because of your pure intentions and concern, God will create some relief for you. Until such time you should engage in Istighfār and be resolute. I believe that following is an excellent way of dealing with interest money.

You should not spend the interest money in your own business but collect it separately. When you need to pay interest, do it from this money. If there is money left over, there is no harm spending it in the cause of the Faith where no personal expense is involved. I have already issued this proclamation for the Jamā'at that God has forbidden interest for personal use. It is prohibited for someone to use the interest money for the upkeep of himself and his family such as food shelter and clothing, or he should give this money to others for similar personal use. But it is not at all prohibited to spend this money in the way of God without receiving any personal benefit to spread His message. It is proven from the Holy Quran that God is the owner of everything. Anything that returns to God becomes clean except the wealth which has been procured without the consent of the people such as stealing, theft, robbery and so on. Such wealth is not suitable for spending in the way of God under any circumstances. But the wealth which is procured with the consent of the people can be spent in the way of God. We should look at our dire need for money against those who are publishing to repudiate our Faith. We are in a struggle with them. There is nothing wrong in spending this money in this struggle. This is my proclamation.

It is sufficient to keep the gaze lower and not look at women directly to remain chaste.
Keep praying to God. It is an act of gratitude that you constantly help the Faith by giving from your wealth. In this hour of need, this is an excellent way to achieve nearness to God. So be thankful that God has given you this ability and my observation is that you are always active on this path. God knows this and He would give you the reward. In addition, one should constantly pray and engage in Istighfār. All is well.

Sincerely, Humble Servant, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad from Qadian. April 24, 1898.

PS: By saying that interest money can be spent in the cause of Faith, I do not mean that one should intentionally get involved in the business of interest. If one is facing circumstances such as you, or one comes into possession of interest money for some reason beyond his control, then it can be spent as I have explained. Divine reward would be additional. (G)

Hadrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad[ra] said, "I recognize this letter clearly that it is written by the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him). Following regulations are obvious from this letter:

1. The interest money can be spent in the payment of interest. In such circumstances, it is better to pay interest from the money which was earned as interest. Muslim businessmen, who are compelled due to circumstances of these days and cannot avoid interest, can make these arrangements.

2. The interest money should be separate from other money. Its accounting should be maintained separately and clearly.

3. The interest money cannot be spent on personal expense under any circumstances nor could it be given to someone else for his personal use.

4. Interest money can be spent in the cause of Faith where no personal expenses are involved such as publications.

5. Those assets can be spent in the cause of Faith whose personal use may be prohibited and which have not been procured against the will of the people. They should not be obtained under coercion or deceit such as theft, robbery or embezzlement.

6. The precarious condition of the religion of Islam and Muslims supports this view.

7. No one should intentionally get involved in the business of interest. The above proclamation is for those circumstances only where one has no control, or he comes into possession of interest money by chance.

8. In the present day, the system of interest has been established in a way that no significant business can be run without getting involved in it. This will be considered an excuse due to circumstances. Under these circumstances, accepting and paying interest will be according to the above instructions. It is because the Promised Messiah considered the circumstances of Sethi Sahib who was a businessman, a valid excuse. The intent of the Promised Messiah is not that one should intentionally get involved in the business of interest. Due to circumstances if one is faced with receiving and paying interest in business, there is no harm in it. This proclamation has been issued keeping such circumstances in view. According to the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) Muslims should not stop doing business because of the fear of getting involved in interest and restrict their trade to small shops where usually there is no concern of interest. By doing so they will destroy their economy compared with other nations.

9. According to this proclamation, banking is permitted for the benefit of the Muslims, and interest can be earned and paid according to the above principles.

10. A person who earns interest according to this proclamation and spends it in the cause of God is liable for reward before God.

11. There is another instruction in this letter about meeting with women who are not observing purdah. These days a lot of women are out there without purdah and it is impossible not to look at them at all. In some situations, one has to meet with these women. Under these circumstances, the instruction of the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) is to keep the gaze low and not to look at them directly. One should not avoid meeting with such women entirely as some women may also be compelled due to their circumstances. One should constantly pray to God that he may be saved from any wrongdoing. It is my observation that when the Promised Messiah (may peace be upon him) would talk with a women without purdah. his eyes would be almost closed. I could not understand why he did that but the wisdom became clear once I grew up.

Another observation clear from the letter of the Promised Messiah is that in the present-day precarious situation of Islam, the best action is to work in support of Islam. There is no better way to reach God.

[Translated from Sīratul-Mahdī by
Hadrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad[ra], Narration number 442]

The Search for God

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad عليه السلام

Extrat from the Review of Religions

Presented below is the first part of a conversation between a non-Muslim visitor and Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام, which took place in Qadian in March 1901. The original transcript of the conversation in Urdu is taken from Malfoozat, Vol. 2, pp. 226-243. Translated by Amatul-Hadi Ahmad.

In March 1901 a gentleman in search of truth, came to see Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad عليه السلام of Qadian. The gentleman who was from the district of Gujarat, India, made the following statement at the start of the conversation:

'Right from the beginning I could feel a sense of religious values within me and in accordance with this I had been, in my thinking, doing some good deeds. I feel much troubled at the thought of being surrounded by those who chase after the world and there is a sense of agitation within me. Once I was strolling on the banks of the river Jehlam when I became aware of a strange experience conveying sense of love from which I derived much pleasure and enjoyment. Whichever way I turned I felt a sense of delight (anand) – in eating, in drinking, in walking, in every movement and every gesture there was love. After a few hours this experience disappeared but its effect continued for at least two months, that is to say, a lesser degree of pleasure still remained with me for two more months. At present I am in a strange state of perplexity. I have tried very hard to regain that experience but I have not been able to find it again. In its search I have been to Lahore to see Babu Ibnash Chandar, a foreman, who is a very active member of Braham Samaj. Unfortunately, he could not see me for much longer than a few minutes, and that only in his office. After that I went to see Pundit Shiv Narain Satianand Agnihotri. I saw how much these people feel spirituality. I worked in their school as third master for about two months and concentrated on self-improvement. I had only gone there to make something out of my life. During my time there I did begin briefly to 'see' something but I was not satisfied and I did not find the peace and love that I desired. I still wished to stay there patiently, but I had to leave due to ill health.

In my own town I once heard Sheikh Maula Baksh Sahib reading your paper from the Great Conference of Religions. I was going somewhere, lost in my own thoughts when my ears caught the sound of his voice. In an unusual manner, I felt it in my soul that these words carried a light within them and that the person who had written these words must also carry a light within him. I read that paper several times and I had the desire to come to Qadian. However, perhaps due to the new developments surrounding the issue of the death of Lekhram, whenever I asked a Muslim for the

address (of the writer of that paper) no one would tell me. Perhaps they feared that I was intending to come and murder Mirza Sahib! My agitation, however, was becoming greater and it is now that my wish has been fulfilled. I want to make something of my life and it is for this purpose that I have come to you, Huzur.'
To this the Promised Messiah ﷺ responded in the following words.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ: The truth is that a person should not be satisfied with the outer shell alone and no person likes to be satisfied with just the shell. Rather, a person wishes to move forward and Islam seeks to take him to that very kernel and spirit which a person by nature wishes to attain. The name of Islam is a name in which the soul finds pleasure. For the soul there is no satisfaction to be found in the names of any other religion. What spirituality is to be found in the name 'Arya'? Islam has been created for peace, for 'shanti ' and for satisfaction for which the human soul hungers and thirsts. It is so in order to convey to the person who hears the name (Islam) that he who truly believes in this religion and practices it, is a person who has true knowledge of God. But the thing is that if a person wishes that everything should happen at once, that a person should attain to the highest levels of knowledge of God in an instant, that can never be. In this world everything happens gradually. There is no knowledge or skill that a person does not have to learn with patience and dedication. It is necessary that he should move systematically through the different stages. You see, the farmer has to wait after he has sown the seed. First he puts one of his dearest things into the ground from where they can easily be picked by animals or 'swallowed' by the earth or wasted through some other means. But experience gives him comfort that a time will come when these seeds of grain which have now been entrusted to the earth, will bear result and in time there will be a green and lush field, and this seed thrust into the ground will turn into his food and livelihood.

Now, you should consider this that the production of food and the means of existence sufficient to keep a person alive for one day, requires a period of six months when the life for which the food is thus produced is finite. How can it then be possible for the spiritual 'food', being nourishment for the spiritual life which is eternal, to be attained in a matter of days? It is true that God has power over things such that, if he so wishes, he is able to do whatever he wills in an instant, and it is our belief that nothing is impossible before him. Islam has not presented a God who, like the God presented by the Aryas can neither bring into being a spirit nor anything material and cannot give peace and eternal salvation to the truthful and to those who seek after him. Not so. Instead, Islam has presented a God who is unique in his powers and strengths. There is none who can compare with him and none who has a share in his powers and attributes. But, yes, his law is such that everything is done gradually and systematically. Hence, if one is not patient and does not have positive expectations, success is difficult. I remember once a person came to me and said that the holy people of earlier times used to make people reach great (spiritual) heights with one blow of their breath. I told him that he was mistaken. This is not God's way of doing things. If you were to lay the floor in a house, it is necessary to first, repair any parts which are in need of repair and wherever there is any filth or dirt, to cleanse it and to purify it with a disinfectant. In short, the ground will be made ready for laying the floor only after a great many schemes and methods have been employed. The human heart is the same. Prior to its becoming worthy of being inhabited by God, it is the throne of Satan and the seat of his government. It is necessary for the destruction

of this government (of Satan) for the sake of the other government (of God).

Very unfortunate indeed is the person who sets out in search of the truth and then does not hold positive expectations (regarding the outcome). Learn at least from the potter and see how much he has to do to make a pot of clay. Watch the laundry man, how much hard work he has to do when he begins to clean dirty and soiled clothes. Sometimes he puts the clothes on the boil, sometimes he rubs them with soap and through different means draws out the dirt and at last the clothes come out clean and white. All the dirt that was in them is washed out. If there is need for so much patience for such inferior things then how foolish is the person who, for the sake of reforming his life and for the sake of the removal of the dirt and filth found in his heart, desires that they should all be drawn out with a single blow and the heart should thereby be cleansed!

Remember, patience is the condition for self-reform. Then the second thing to remember is that the purification of morals and of the soul cannot take place without close contact with a person who is pure. The first door that opens, opens because of the removal of filth. However, there still remain those impurities which have a connection (with one's inner self). In the company of a pure person, these inner impurities find an antidote and begin to be gradually removed. This is because there can be no relationship with the pure spirit, which in the Holy Qur'an is called 'Ruh-ul-Quds', the holy spirit, unless there is some affinity with it. We cannot say when such a relationship is created but, certainly, one should practice the means for its attainment. One should 'turn to dust' upon this path and tread upon it with patience and steadfastness. God will not waste the efforts of one who strives hard and such a person finally will be rewarded with that light for which he had been searching. I am surprised and do not understand how it is that a human being acts so daringly when he knows that God exists!

The person I have just mentioned, who had said to me that the earlier holy men turned people into saints just by blowing over them, was advised by me that such stories were incorrect and that this was against God's law. Instead, a person should strive (for God), it is only then that God will open his path for him. The man did not pay any attention to this and left. After some considerable time he came to see me again — his condition this time was even worse than before. In short, it is the misfortune of man that he adopts the rule of hurry and when he sees that nothing can be achieved in a hurry as God's law is gradual and systematic — he becomes agitated. The result is that he becomes an atheist – this is the first step to atheism. I have seen people who either present great wishful claims that they wish to become this or that, and on the other extreme, in the end they accept a life of a low level of (moral) existence. Once a person came to me to ask for some help. He was a Jogi, (a person wrapped in dyed cloths, symbolising asceticism). He told me that he had gone to such and such a place to beg from some dead person. It appeared from his condition and his conversation that his view was that one should exist on charity, asking for it from others. The real and true fact is this that one should strive with patience. God watches till the last limit. Whoever is seen to be weak and deceitful, such a one cannot find the path to his honoured presence. Even though the alchemist knows that up to now nothing has been achieved, he still carries on patiently with his experiments. My meaning is this that first there is need for patience. The true purpose is that there should develop a love of God. But I say that love is yet another level or it is a consequence. First

of all, however, it is necessary that there should also develop a certainty about the existence of God. After this there develops in the soul, of its own accord, an aptitude for absorption and the soul is naturally attracted towards God. Pleasure and enjoyment from this increases as one's vision and knowledge (of this dimension) increases. Without knowledge there can never arise any pleasure. The real basis of fervour is knowledge. It is true knowledge that gives rise to love. It is the union of knowledge and love that results in pleasure. Remember this that a glimpse of beauty by itself is not sufficient to give rise to feelings of love without there being any knowledge of it. Consider it certain that without knowledge, love is impossible. Without the knowledge of him who is the beloved, what kind of love would that be? To say otherwise is an imaginary thing. There are many who consider a humble human being to be a god. What sort of pleasure can people find in such a god? Like the Christians who make Jesus into a God and then call out, 'God is love, God is love'. Their love cannot be a true love. It is merely a wishful and imaginary love when it has not been their fortune to have acquired true knowledge of God.

After understanding the importance of patience, it is then necessary for one to, first, correct one's beliefs. Hindus present one thing as God, the Christians another and the Chinese yet another. The God of the Muslims is the God that they have, through the Qur'an, presented before the world. Until that God has been identified and recognised, there can be no relationship or love with God. Nothing can come of mere claims.

After there has been a correction of beliefs, the second stage is to progress in the knowledge of God by staying in the company of righteous persons and by asking God, through prayer, for the ability to see the path of truth. As the ability to see the truth and the knowledge of God increases, so will there be the development of love. It should be remembered that without the true knowledge of God, there can be no progress in love. You see, man does not love tin or iron as much as he loves copper, and he does not hold copper as dear as he does silver, and gold is even more of an object of desire. Jewels and diamonds are considered to be yet more desirable. What is the reason for this? It is this that man receives knowledge about metals which results in an increase in his desire for some of them relative to others. In short, the truth is that the cause of progress in love and for the increase in the value of and the desire for love is knowledge. Before a person can desire pleasure and enjoyment, it is necessary that he attains knowledge. However, the most important element on which are based all the others, is patience together with a positive attitude. Until there is patience to an amazing degree, nothing can be achieved. When a person perseveres with untiring patience and strives and struggles in the path of God, then God the Almighty in accordance with his promise, opens the path of guidance for him. As is stated in the Holy Qur'an: 'We will surely guide in our ways those who strive after us'. (Ch. 29, v. 70), i.e. those who adopt Our way and strive and struggle, We do guide them towards our path and doors are opened for them. It is very true when it is said, 'Those who seek, shall find'.

I will say this, however, that a person who comes to me (apparently searching for God) and then after a cursory conversation, walks away, such a person mocks with God. This is not the way of seeking God nor has God set up such a system.

So, the first condition for the search of God is a true desire and the second is to be patiently

committed to this search. It is a fact that as one progresses in age, one increases in experience. Does this not necessitate living in the company of a holy person? I have seen many men who in their early years abandon the world and cry out loudly but ultimately their end is such that they are found to be totally engrossed in worldly matters and in fact became worms of the world. Some trees bear a sort of fruit which is of a temporary nature, as is the case with the mulberry tree. This tree displays an early show of a fruit all of which falls away and the real fruit then follows later. Similarly, the desire to search for God also arises temporarily. If one does not at this stage show patience and a positive attitude, the temporary desire is not only extinguished, but is obliterated from the heart forever and turns one into a worm of the world. However, if one works with truth and with a positive attitude, this temporary fervour and thirst for the search of truth does give rise to a real and true desire which progresses daily, so much so that if there is a mountain of difficulties and tribulations on the way, the true seeker will not care in the least and will continue to progress in his aim. So, the person who at the time of the initial fervour and desire is patient and understands that he has to stay loyal to this feeling for the rest of his life, is a person of good fortune. But he who gives up after a few experiments and becomes tired, all that is left for him is that he should go round saying that he has seen many who just talk and found many who were just like shopkeepers, but that he found none who could show the truth nor any who could lead to God!

I don't know the inner state or the intention of everyone who comes to see me and states that he has come for God and wishes to find God. I must, however, say this that the first thing a person who actively seeks God must do is to check and rectify his beliefs. He should ascertain (for himself) what sort of God it is that he is trying to find. Is the God that he is seeking really the Creator and the Master of the world? Is he a God that possesses all good attributes and is pure from all deficiencies and negative characteristics? Or, is the God that he is searching for the child of a woman or some other such weak and feeble god from among the 330 million gods (which are said to exist). I say this because if one's beloved and the centre of one's desires is stood at the edge of an ocean, what will be gained by diving in! For example, the Christians state that the Messiah son of Mary is God even though he was born from the womb of a woman in the same way as any other human being is born and he ate and drank and had all the attendant human needs including those of ridding the body of waste matter. Now, this much is possible that someone should love him but human wisdom can never suggest that such a weak human being may also be God or that gods are given birth by women. When the first step is on the ground of falsehood, what hope can there be of the second step being on the ground of truth? Rays of light fall upon the heart as a result of believing in a living God who is the possessor of all perfect attributes. Where is this to be found with a belief in a mortal being and the worship of an image of weakness and feebleness?

There is an Arabic saying: 'He who seeks has no religion'. A seeker should abandon all prejudices and suspend all beliefs and then begin his search for true beliefs. Only then can there be any hope of progress. In this search God should be the foundation stone. If this is the case then the final 'stone' will also be God. Rushing these things is not a good thing. It usually causes deprivation for an unfortunate person. For instance, if you did not stay with us for a while and leave, and then

say such things as, 'There was nothing there', or 'I didn't get anything from there', then, tell me, what will be our loss in that? There are many in this world who can talk like that but they are unfortunate and deprived. You see, if some shapes of geometry are presented to a child, he may like some of them but his liking them can be of no benefit to him because he is unaware of their properties and does not know what benefits can be gained from them.

I have seen people who make objections against Islam and I have collected these objections and I say this truly that the point on which those who are unfamiliar with these matters have raised an objection, is precisely the point where a treasure of wisdom, truth and deep knowledge is buried and the person who objects has nothing but foolishness and blindness. With their objections they prove that they are narrow-minded and possess an unprincipled nature otherwise they would not have raised objections against what is, in fact, a mine of deep and true knowledge. It is for this reason that I advise you to pursue your search for the truth with gentleness and patience. You are in search of God. The best way for you is that you, first, check and correct your beliefs which will help you in identifying what that something called 'God' is that you wish to find. This will enable you to progress in your knowledge of God. There is in the true knowledge of God a strong capacity to absorb love and it can become a means of developing in you the love of God. Without this any claims of love are like the superficial fruit which disappears after a few days.

You should remember this and this is our religion, that God's light does not shine upon a person until that light descends from the heavens. It is absolutely true that blessing comes down from the heavens. Until God himself reveals his light for the one who seeks him, the speed of (progress) of the seeker is like that of a worm and that is how it should be because he is engulfed by all manner of ignorance and darkness as well as facing the difficulties of this path. But when the light (of God) shines upon him, his heart and his mind become bright and being thus enlightened by the light his speed becomes as fast as lightening.

Questioner: Hazoor, I am not an adherent of any religion. The Promised Messiah عليه السلام: If someone comes to us having decided that they will not agree to anything then we can say nothing–what can we say? But if someone possesses intelligence, he will be compelled to make some path (for himself).

What is religion? It is that path which a person adopts for himself. Every person needs to adopt a path. Even the non-religious person who does not believe in God needs to adopt a path (for his life) and that is mazhab ('religion'). But, yes, the point under consideration should be whether the adopted path is a path through which one could attain true steadfastness, eternal pleasure, peace and satisfaction.

You see, mazhab (religion) is a common word which means a space for walking upon, that is, a path and this word in itself is not specific to faith. Specialists in the field of every type of knowledge and skill such as medicine, geography, astronomy, the study of nature, etc., all have a mazhab (a direction) which they follow. No-one can dispute this. This is a necessary aspect of human life to which there can be no exception. So, just as the human soul requires a body and meaning requires word and perspective, so man needs mazhab (a path). It is not our concern, nor are we arguing that someone should say 'Allah', or 'God', or 'Premaishar'. Our concern is just this: what does he understand about the deity that he calls upon? I say that you can call him whatever name you like but you should say what he is. You should define

the characteristics you have attributed to him. It is the issue of the attributes of the divine being that is the major problem which should be given serious consideration.

Questioner: I believe that the purpose of mazhab (religion) is to correct one's nature.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ: There is at present the King, Edward VII. Now, even if we did call someone else that, it would be forced, it would not make that person a king. What we desire is exactly this that the true God should be identified and all the other presumptions should be abandoned.

What is Islam? The very name of Islam has been given by Allah to connote the 'nature' of Allah. Islam is a natural religion, (i.e. it takes human nature fully into account). But when is the truth of these matters revealed? It is revealed when a person stays in the company of a holy person with patience and steadfastness. There is great blessing in steadfastness. Look at the honey-bee. When it engages in its hard work steadfastly, it produces something so fine and useful as honey. Likewise, a person finds God when he engages in the search of God with steadfastness. What is more, he not only just finds God, it is my belief that he actually 'sees' him.

In the acquisition of worldly knowledge how much expenditure of finance and time is involved. These (procedures of acquiring) knowledge clearly point to the rules of acquiring spiritual knowledge. The path that a beginner should adopt in the realm of spiritual knowledge is that he should, first, acquire familiarity with the (nature of) God's being and then he should gain familiarity with God's attributes, familiarity with which would take him to the level of certainty about God. It is then that he will be informed about God's being and about his perfect attributes and at that point his soul will speak from within that it has found God and is fully satisfied. When there is such faith in God that it reaches the level of certainty and a person feels that he has 'seen' God and has acquired a familiarity with God's attributes, at that stage a person develops a hatred for sin. The nature (of such a person) that was once attracted towards sin, now hates it, and this condition is known as tauba, i.e. repentance.

The point that after acquiring total faith one's nature comes to hate sin is something that can be clearly and easily understood. You know that there are poisons such as strychnine or that there are some poisonous animals — why does man fear them? Simply for this reason that experience shows that a certain poison, taken in a certain quantity, proves fatal. Many have been seen to have died after an intake of poison and that is why one is not inclined towards taking poison – one fears it. When this is the case, what then is the reason that all manner of sins are committed, so much so that if there was even a paisa (a small coin) lying in the street, someone would stoop down to pick it up, when a brief enquiry could establish its owner. I know that there have been cases where for such paltry amounts as 12 aanas the lives of innocent children have been taken. You can see from the proceedings of the courts what dark and fearful scenes emerge. Lies are told for the most petty things. The bad and evil deeds are flowing like a river in full flow. Why is this? Simply because there is no belief in God. People are afraid of snakes and poisons because they believe them to be fatal and they have faith in such things being dangerous. If there is complete faith in God, then I see no reason why there would not be a hatred of sin.

There are two things which are important for a human being — to safeguard against the bad and to run towards the good and there are two aspects of goodness. One is the abandonment of harmful acts and the other is the performance of deeds which are of benefit to others. A person cannot

achieve perfection merely through giving up bad deeds unless there is also a move towards the performance of deeds which benefit others. This is an indicator of how much change has, in fact, taken place (in a person) and the higher levels of goodness are granted only when a person has faith in the attributes of God as well as knowledge of those attributes. Unless this condition is fulfilled, one cannot even protect oneself against bad deeds, leave alone being beneficial to others which is a great thing indeed. Is it not the case that people also stand in awe of kings and there is fear, to an extent, of the penal system of India and many people do not go against the law? Why then the audacity to go against the law of the one who is Judge Supreme! Is there any other reason for this than that there is no faith in him — this is the only reason.

In short, the first stage of safeguarding oneself against bad deeds can only be successfully completed when there is faith in God. The second stage should then be one of searching for the path that was adopted by God's holy people and there is only one such path which has been adopted by all the God's holy people who by treading this path benefited from God's beneficence. The way to discover this path is this that one should try to ascertain what kind of relationship God had with the holy people.

The first stage of safeguarding against the bad is acquired through the manifestation of awe-inspiring (Jalali) attributes of God because he is the enemy of those who indulge in base and shameless acts. The second stage is granted through the manifestation of God's Jamali attributes, i.e. attributes of beneficence and beauty. The ultimate, however, is that nothing can be achieved unless one is granted strength and power from God in the form of what, according to Islamic terminology, is known as ruhul qudus (the holy spirit). It is a force which is granted by God and with its descent comes inner peace and tranquillity (sakeena) and there develops a natural love and attraction for goodness. The person endowed with ruhul qudus runs to perform good deeds with pleasure and enjoyment whereas others see it is as a heavy burden. Just as even a child enjoys eating something delicious, so when a person develops a relationship with God and the holy spirit descends upon him from God, the performance of good deeds for such a person becomes like drinking a sweet and delicious drink. The beauty that exists within goodness begins to become apparent to him and he runs helplessly towards good deeds and the thought of bad deeds makes him shudder.

The nature of these matters, however, is such that they cannot be adequately expressed in words because they are matters of the heart. The true significance of these matters can only be known through feeling them when one is granted fresh signs of light. One should not, however, begin to feel proud and should not consider experiences of deep emotion that, at times, one may have, to be the ultimate spiritual state. Such experiences are of a temporary nature. Sometimes it does happen that a person reading a novel cries at the painful circumstances described there. The reader of the novel clearly knows, however, that it is an imaginary story and not a true one. Hence, if crying or feeling a sense of deep emotion were to be the basis of true happiness and enjoyment, nowhere would there be people more advanced in spiritual enjoyment than in Europe because thousands of novels are published there and millions of people shed tears while reading them.

The truth is that it is in the nature of man that he laughs at something humorous and cries in

situations which lead him to tears and, at times, he also derives a certain pleasure from this. This pleasure, however, cannot be the basis of any spiritual discernment. For instance, a man falls in love with a woman and in his state of ardour, makes up verses and recites them which makes him both happy and sad and he weeps. There is in human beings this capacity whether it is used appropriately or inappropriately. A person should not be satisfied at just being in possession of this capacity. God has endowed (mankind) with this capacity so that the true seekers may not be deprived and, when used appropriately, it should act as a prelude to the next stage of spiritual (development) and should become like a faculty.

In short, matters such as crying or the abandonment of certain other material things or relationships are temporary things. One should not become inactive through reliance on them. Matters upon which a true knowledge of God can be based are that if a person is tried in the path of God again and again and is thrown into the river of difficulties and tribulations, even then he should not be perturbed and should keep moving forward. After this, he is made aware of the knowledge he has of God and it is this that is a true pleasure and a true bounty. At such a time there is a deeply felt emotion but this emotion is not temporary, rather, it is filled with joy and pleasure and the soul flows towards God like a spring of pure water. In other words, before reaching the true ocean, one sees a mirage which also appears like an ocean. The person who is deceived by the illusion and does not move forward, loses hope and is left without any achievement or success. On the other hand, the person who does not give up and keeps moving forward, is the one who attains the desired aim.

God has placed different states within the human soul. Among these is the state of feeling deep emotion which makes one cry. One person may become affected by the mere recitation of a few verses of poetry while another person moves on, not relying on such measures and reaches the true point of his journey. Remember this that for the true seeker of truth, there is the condition that wherever he finds truth, he should take it. This is a light which guides him. At the present time there has started in the world a 'battle' to attract people (to different religions). The Arya are trying to pull people to their beliefs, the Brahmu are calling to themselves and the Dev Samaj people are inviting to their faith, whilst the Christians present Christianity. In other words, every group tries to attract people to itself and the circle of differences between them is becoming ever wider. However, what we are giving an invitation for and that which we can inform any seeker of truth is this that he should search for God. Take the Aryas, for instance, they swear at and curse all holy and truthful people. For them no matter how much a person truly loves (God) and no matter how holy he is, he can never attain salvation. According to their beliefs, God has not even created the smallest atom. Now, tell me, how can a true seeker of truth place any hope on such a Premaishar (God) and how can the omnipotence and majesty of God create in his soul any deep emotion that could take him away from sin, when he considers that not a single atom of his existence has been created by God. Again, if we accept that God did not bless any other country with his word, other than that of the Vedas, one is left without hope. In short, our advice is that whoever wishes to tread the path of seeking the truth, the purpose and the aim of his search should be the search for God. When he acquires true belief in the true and one God, there will flow a river of truths and of true knowledge of God.

Remember that truths and fine points are related to knowledge. The greater the knowledge, the

Continued on page 12

Mantle of Righteousness

Bashir Ahmad Orchard

Wonderful is the jewel the name of which is righteousness. Blessed is he who practises righteousness. So O ye Muslims! perfect your righteousness. (The Promised Messiah [as])

Man has been given a lease of life on this planet for the primary purpose of cultivating within himself Divine attributes whereby he may become an embodiment of righteousness shedding heavenly light wherever he treads. There is no worthier or higher goal in life than the acquisition of holiness and righteousness which Muslims have been exhorted to cultivate through obedience to the laws of God. All kinds of blessings have been promised to those who earnestly strive forward on the Right Path:

And whoso obeys Allah and this Messenger of His shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings namely the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs and the Righteous. And excellent companions are these. (4:70)

This verse reveals that the doors are ever open to the higher realms of spiritual attainment wherein lie terraces of blessings as far as the eye of the soul can see because both in this life and in the next life rewards are graded according to individual achievement. God says regarding the status of true believers in this world:

They have grades of rank with their Lord. (8:5)

And speaking of their status in the world to come God says:

Therein they will hear no idle talk nor lying. A recompense from thy Lord – a gift in proportion to their works. (78:36-37)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) has also said:

There are hundred grades in paradise prepared by Allah for those who fight in the path of Allah and, in between each, is as great a distance as is between earth and heaven. (Bukhari)

If every Muslim settled down in earnest to clothe himself with the heavenly mantle of righteousness then very soon every nook and corner of the earth would be lit up with the effulgent light of Islam; but righteousness cannot be attained without the constant worship and remembrance of God. Thus God says in the Holy Quran:

I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me. (51:57)

Worship embraces every thought, word and deed and does not relate only to formal prayers. Whatever is done or avoided solely for the purpose of winning the pleasure of God is an act

of worship while any intention displeasing to God has been described as an act of idolatry.

Everything thou hast in thy mind,
Every thought thou nourisheth,
Other than that of God
And of winning His approbation
Is an idol which thou worshippeth.
O thou weak of faith!
Beware of these hidden idols!
Guard will thy heart,
And keep it always
Out of their reach. (The Promised Messiah [as])

Righteousness is the elixir of life because it is the only prescription which tranquillises the mind, heart and soul. The Holy Quran teems with verses exhorting Muslims to cultivate righteousness.

O ye men worship your Lord Who created you and those who were before you that you may become righteous. (3:52)The best provision is righteousness. (2:198)

The clarion call of the Holy Quran summons Muslims into the arena of dedication to fight and conquer the enemies of righteousness. The battle of life is no other than the mastery of self in conformity with the ideals of Islam.

The goal of life is now crystal clear; but it should be remembered that nothing worthwhile can be gained without effort. The shining cloak of righteousness shimmers with resplendence high above on its celestial peak. The ascending path is narrow, tortuous and studded with pitfalls; but the impediments are not insurmountable. He who is in earnest can reach the summit and invest himself with this heavenly mantle.

Continued from page 31

let them confine our people to prison for no crime other than reciting the kalima (declaration of faith), let them confiscate and destroy our mosques, let them blacken their books and newspapers with their lies and forgeries against us; let them spread their wicked fabrications through their conferences and crooked propaganda; they will never be able to prevent us from raising high the banner of Islām. Weak as we may be, oppressed by our own people, forced to leave our homes and our countries, alone as we are with no earthly power or material might; we have no complaint. We supplicate to Allāh alone as did the Holy Prophet[sa] : Our Lord, To Thee we submit our complaint. We are weak and without means. Our people look down upon us. Thou art Lord of the weak and the oppressed and Thou art our Lord. To whom wilt Thou abandon us — to strangers who push us about or to the enemy who oppresses us in our own countries? If Thou art not angered with us, we care not for our enemy. Thy mercy be with us. We seek refuge in the light of Thy face. It is Thou who canst drive away the darkness from the world and give peace to all, here and hereafter. Let not Thy anger and Thy wrath descend on us. And there is no power and no refuge except with Thee.

Endnotes

[1] Khan, Muhammad Zafrulla. Muhammad: Seal of the Prophets. London Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980. Chapter 2.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Khan, Muhammad Zafrulla. Muhammad: Seal of the Prophets. London Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980. Chapter 3.
[5] Ibid.



The Successful Preacher

Maulana Abdul Wahab Adam

Preaching is of paramount importance in the life of every prophet. The first responsibility of a prophet is to communicate to his people the message he received from God. Addressing the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān: "O Messenger! convey to the people what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord" (5:68).

All the responsibilities of the prophets can be summarized in the main responsibility of the plain delivery of their message. The Holy Qur'ān says: "But are the Messengers responsible for anything except the plain delivery of the Message?" (16:36). The success of each prophet in his mission depends on the abilities bestowed upon him by God to convey his message. In this regard, the Prophet Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم has far excelled all. God the Exalted bestowed upon him the most charming and excellent qualities. First, he had the love of God in his heart; nay, the light of God engulfed all his heart till it turned into light, as the Holy Qur'ān describes it: "Light upon Light" (24:36).
Secondly, the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم love for God was translated into love for His creation, in particular for the love of mankind. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم reflected in himself the attribute of God "The Most Loving". It was only him who has been described as "A mercy for the whole of mankind". These two aspects of love, the love of God and the love of mankind, were the two wings by which the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم soared high and reached the highest pinnacles of success in preaching and conveying his message.

Since the very early moments of his ministry these two aspects of love were clearly visible in his relationship with others. Those who were intimately acquainted with his private life were able to see the glow of love that overwhelmed his heart and exhibited itself in his relationship with God and in his relationship with his fellow beings. After receiving the early revelations, the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم was burdened with fears and worries as to how he could carry out the responsibilities that God intended to put on his shoulders. His loving wife, Hazrat Khadījah رضي الله عنه, consoled him, affirming:

God is witness, He has not sent you this Word that you should fail and prove unworthy, that He should then give you up. How can God do such a thing, while you are kind and considerate to your relations, help the poor and forlorn and bear their burdens? You are restoring the virtues which had disappeared from our country. You treat your guests with honour and help those who are in distress (Bukhārī).

What a code of ethics the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم had followed even before he received any revelation. It was a code of ethics that reflects a genuine love for God and for man.

In modern techniques of debate or negotiations, the professionals say that you can win the debate or you can impose your terms in a negotiation if you can get your adversary to agree with you on a certain principal; then if you use that principal as a premise upon which you build an argument that you present as a direct consequence of that principal, then in such a case the opponent has no alternative but to agree with your terms. The Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلمused exactly the same technique more than fourteen hundred years ago. When he received a revelation instructing him to declare openly his message, he ascended to a height and called every one of the tribes of Quraish by its name. When they had collected together, he addressed them saying:

"O Quraish! were I to tell you that a large host has collected together on the other side of this height and is preparing to attack you, would you believe me?" They responded: "Surely, we would believe you as we have always found you truthful."[1]
Here the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم, like an expert negotiator using the techniques of present day professionals, got his people to agree on a principal, that he was always found to be truthful. He used this principal as a premise upon which he built his argument that was in direct consequence of the principal they had agreed on. He said to his people:
"I am the Messenger of God to you. I warn you that God's chastisement is approaching. Believe in God so that you may be saved."[2]

Bent on arrogance and wickedness rather than on wisdom and intelligence, they could not meet the strong impressive technique used by the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم. When they could not refute his argument logically they took the route taken by the losers. They resorted to mocking and derision. One of them, Abu Lahab, replied:

"Ruin seize you. Did you call us only for this."[3]
Having said that, they all went their way mocking and joking.

It is sometimes said that the shortest way to a man's heart is the one which passes through his stomach. The wife who cooks delicious dishes for her husband usually enjoys his love. This technique is also valid in preaching. Many of those who are actively engaged in preaching would invite their friends for a cup of tea or to the dinner table in order to communicate the message of the true Islām. The Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلمused the same technique. In the early days, after publicly proclaiming his mission, he directed Hazrat Ali رضي الله عنه to have a meal prepared and invited the descendants of Abdul Muttalibرضي الله عنه to partake of it so that the occasion might be utilised for conveying the divine message to them. About forty persons responded to the invitation. The Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلمwanted to say something after the meal but again Abu Lahab made some observation which caused the guests to disperse.
A little later, the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلمdirected Hazrat Aliرضي الله عنه to prepare another meal to

which he invited his relatives. On this occasion, he addressed them as follows:
"Descendants of Abdul Muttalibرضي الله عنه, I have brought you something, better than which no one has brought for his people. I call you to God. If you respond to my call, you will become the recipients of the best bounties of this life and the next. Which of you will be my helper in this enterprise?"

There was a dead silence, when suddenly Hazrat Aliرضي الله عنه stood up and said:

"Though I am the weakest and the youngest of all these who are present here, I shall support you. Thereupon, the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم, addressing his guests said:

"If you will hear and follow what this young one has said, you would do well."

On this there was general laughter and Abu Lahab said to his elder brother, Abu Talibرضي الله عنه:
"Now Muhammad directs you to follow your son."
The guests departed deriding and laughing at the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم.

Patience and forbearance are qualities no successful preacher can do without. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمhad to go through many situations that demanded the exercise of extreme patience and forbearance. In many situations he was subjected to severe persecution and in others he was subjected to temptation; but in every situation he demonstrated the highest degree of steadfastness.

Once the arch enemies of Islām and the chiefs of Makkah gathered together after sunset to discuss what they should do to persuade Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلمaway from his new religion, which posed a serious threat to their own personal prestige. They decided to send for him and persuade him to change his ways. A messenger was immediately dispatched to inform the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم that the chiefs of his people were anxious to speak to him. He hurried to the Ka'bah, anticipating that the Makkahn chiefs may have at last come to their senses and were ready to listen to him. When he took his seat among them they said:

"Muhammad[sa], we have not known any man among the Arabs who has created such troubles and problems for his people as you have done by your claims. If your purpose is to gather wealth we are willing to bestow upon you so much that you may be the wealthiest of us all. If you are seeking honour and status we are willing to make you our chief. If you hanker after ruling power, we are even prepared to acknowledge you as our king. If you can be made happy by marriage with a young woman, we can provide you with the best maiden among the Arabs. If your agitation is due to some disease or disorder, we are prepared to provide for your proper treatment at our expense. All that we ask you in return is to desist from denouncing our idols."[4]

It is said by those who believe in the divinity of Jesusعليه السلام that no human being could have resisted the temptation which Jesusعليه السلام was subjected to by Satan. A study of both incidents of temptation reveals that the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم was subjected to a temptation different to that of Jesusعليه السلام. The Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلمwas tempted by his people, whom he knew to have the power to make good their promise. Jesusعليه السلام was tempted by Satan, whom Jesusعليه السلام knew could not fulfil his promise. The Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم knew that when a noble Arab chief makes a public promise he stands by his word at any cost. Jesus عليه السلام knew, even as a small child knows, that Satan does not stand by his word. The price that the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلمwas asked to pay was only

to desist from denouncing the idols of Makkah, while the price Jesusعليه السلام was demanded to pay was to prostrate and worship Satan. Finally, when both incidents of temptation took place, the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم and his small band of helpless followers were suffering from severe persecution, which usually makes one succumb and yield to temptation; while Jesusعليه السلام had suffered no persecution whatsoever before this incident, which took place right after he was baptised by John in the River Jordan (Matthew 4).

Any false claimant in the Holy Prophet'sصلى الله عليه وسلم place would have been inclined to compromise with such an offer: Kingdom and honour instead of persecution and humiliation, wealth and riches instead of poverty and need, the most beautiful girl among the Arabs instead of his old wife who was in her sixties. But not Muhammad [sa]. His love for God transcended all such temptations. He replied to the chiefs of Quraish and said:

"I suffer from no disease or disorder and I desire none of these things you want to offer me. I am a messenger of God and have brought you His message. My heart is full of sympathy for you. If you listen to me and follow what I say, it will be entirely for your benefit, both here and in the hereafter. If you reject my message, I shall wait the judgement of God with patience and forbearance."[5]

The enemies of Islām realized that no temptation would turn the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم from his mission and no persecution would make him change his mind. The only solution was to get rid of him once and for all. How could they get rid of him while he was under the protection of one of their chiefs, Hazrat Abu Talibرضي الله عنه? They decided to send a deputation to address Hazrat Abu Talibرضي الله عنه and demand that he should give up Muhammad [sa].

This incident provided an occasion to reveal some of the many qualities that the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمpossessed, namely his perseverance and determination to propagate his message. Without perseverance and unyielding determination, no preacher can be successful in conveying his message.

The deputation came to Hazrat Abu Talibرضي الله عنه and said: "You are one of our chiefs and for your sake we have so far spared your nephew, Muhammad[sa]. The time has come, however, when we should put an end to this conflict in our midst. We ask and demand that he should desist from saying anything against our idols. If he agrees to this, our conflict and controversy with him will be over. We urge you to persuade him. But if you are unable to do so, then one of two things must happen. Either you have to give up your nephew, or we, your people, will give you up."

Hazrat Abu Talibرضي الله عنه was very much upset. He sent for the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم and explained to him the demand made by the elders of Makkah. "If you do not agree," he said with tears in his eyes, "then either I have to give you up or my people will give me up." The Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم was in evident sympathy with his uncle. Tears came to his eyes and he said:

"I ask you not to give up your people, I ask you not to stand by me. Instead, you may give me up and stand by your people. But the One and Only God is my witness when I say that even if they were to place the sun on my right and the moon on my left, I would not desist from preaching the truth of the One God. I shall persist in it till God enables me to discharge it fully or till I perish in the attempt."

Khidmat Khalq, or the rendering of a service to those who need a helping hand, is one of the most effective tools in preaching. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلمutilised this tool to the full. A woman

once came to Makkah to settle down when she heard the propaganda widely spread by the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم enemies accusing him of influencing people by his magic and leading them astray. She was very much perturbed and decided to leave Makkah and go back to where she used to live a few miles outside Makkah. She collected her luggage and started her journey back. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم met her on her way. Seeing an old woman loaded with luggage he offered a helping hand. The woman welcomed his offer, thinking she would pay him when she arrived at her home. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم carried the woman's luggage over his head and followed her. On the way he asked her why she was leaving Makkah. She told him what she heard about someone called Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم who influenced people by his magic and led them astray. She explained that she was leaving Makkah to save herself from his evil magic. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not say anything but kept chatting with her while carrying all her load until they reached her home. She wanted to pay him but he declined. She was very much impressed by his attitude and by his conversation. She asked him about his name and he replied " Muhammad sa". Realizing that the charming, kind and helping person was the same one whom she had been led by the Makkahns to fear, she smiled and said, "Now I understand what kind of magic you use upon people. It is the only kind of magic which God bestows upon the truthful ones."

A successful preacher may possess so many good qualities but, when intimidated or provoked, he loses his temper and vents his anger. This was not the case with the Holy Prophet sa. He was subjected to all kinds of intimidations but always maintained self-control. Once a Jew wanted to test the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم quality of self-control. Knowing that a true prophet would exercise extreme self-control, he planned to intimidate him and observe his reaction. He lent him some money and on the day when the payment was due, he came to the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم while he was sitting among his companions and demanded the payment of the loan in a very provoking and intimidating manner. Hazrat Omar رضي الله عنه who was present could not restrain himself, he drew out his sword, took hold of the man and, addressing the Holy Prophet sa, said: "Messenger of Allāh, permit me to cut off the head of this enemy of God." The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم objected, saying that he should not have resorted to violence. Instead he should have advised the man to demand his loan in a proper manner. The Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم then directed that the man should be paid the full amount of the loan and also be paid an extra amount as a compensation for Omar's attitude towards him that had frightened him. The man admitted that he had planned the scene in order to test the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وسلم quality of self-control. As he was completely satisfied with the noble qualities of the Holy Prophet sa, he had no choice but to declare his acceptance of Islām.

I cannot close without mentioning a couple of incidents in which most of his noble qualities were manifested with such excellence that they can never be matched. His qualities of forbearance, of determination, of patience, of steadfastness, of love for mankind, even for those who were not yet born and, above all, his love for God, his complete trust in Him and his utter reliance upon Him; all these qualities were manifested like a glowing sun. The tribe of Quraish had compelled the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his helpless followers to be confined in a quarter belonging to Hazrat Abu Talib رضي الله عنه situated in a narrow valley. They were denied all necessities of life. The Quraish would sell them nothing nor would they allow any provision to reach them. They were exposed to extreme misery and distress. The wailing of the

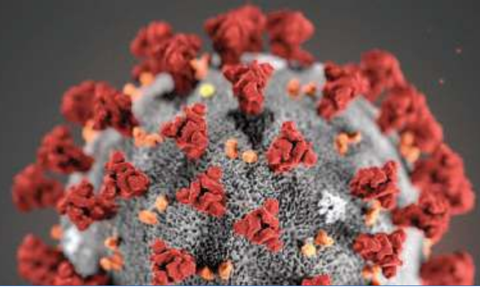
famished children within the valley used to be audible outside. When the period of confinement that had lasted for about three years came to an end, the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم suffered two grievous bereavements by the deaths of his wife, Hazrat Khadījah رضي الله عنه, and his uncle, Hazrat Abu Talibرضي الله عنه. The death of his faithful and devoted wife deprived him of his counsellor and support. The death of his uncle left him exposed to the violence and attacks of his foes without a strong hand to protect him. The Quraish were adamant in opposing him. He met with disappointment and frustration in every direction. None of the people of Makkah or its visitors was willing to listen to him. Yet, he did not give up. His enthusiasm to propagate his message did not change. He decided to go to Al-Taif, a town about forty miles from Makkah. He called on the leading men of the city but all of them rejected him and abused him. He called on the most prominent chief of the city but he put him off and incited the rabble of the city to chase him out of town. They pelted him and his servant Zaid with stones and went on reviling them for a distance of three miles. Although blood was flowing from both legs of the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم and was streaming down from Zaid's head, who was trying to shield the Holy Prophet[sa], the mob did not desist until they chased them across the sandy plains. Taking refuge in a vineyard, completely exhausted and utterly helpless, the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم was asked by an angel whether he would like his persecutors to be destroyed. "No," said the Holy Prophet[sa], "I hope that from one of them would be born one who would worship the One True God." Then, in complete humility and in utter reliance on God, he supplicated:

"Lord, I submit my complaint to Thee. I am weak and without means. My people look down upon me. Thou art Lord of the poor and the weak and Thou art my Lord. To whom wilt Thou abandon me – to strangers who push me about or to the enemy who oppresses me in my own town? If Thou art not angered with me, I care not for my enemy"

May Allāh shower His countless mercies and blessings upon the Holy Prophet[sa], who sustained all sorts of unimaginable hardships so that those who come after him may see the light that he saw and worship the Living God whom he worshipped. But, alas, for his followers! They have reverted to the same old ways of tyranny and corruption. They have gone astray and have become divided among themselves. They fight each other and take pride in shedding each other's blood. They have occupied themselves in exploiting and oppressing their own people. While rendering a lip-service to Islām, they have presented to the world the most ugly and detestable image of Islām. And now, when God has sent the Promised Messiahas, Hazrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, to carry high the banner of the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم and to lead the world to the way of the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم and to propagate the true religion of Islām throughout the whole world, they have denounced him and his followers as kāfirs (disbelievers) outside the pale of Islām. He and his followers have and are being persecuted in the same way the Holy Prophetصلى الله عليه وسلم and his followers were persecuted in their time. However, we have seen the excellent example of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his determination in preaching and propagating the True Religion. We shall follow that excellent example. Let the enemies of Islām devise what evil plans they please. Their evil will fall upon themselves. Let them enflame the fire of hatred and division but that fire will consume only themselves. Let them cowardly assassinate our helpless old men in the dark, let them slaughter our defenceless young men and shoot down our weak women;

Continued on page 25

Looking after yourself during lockdown



Waqaas Anwar (Naib Qaid Zahanat wa Sehat-e-Jismani)

The world has changed. Not just a few aspects of life but a complete overhaul affecting every level of society. One of those changes that will be pivotal and go down in history for decades if not centuries to come. The coronavirus pandemic that started off in the Wuhan province of China has rapidly spread to almost every corner of the globe with countries grappling with controlling both the velocity and extent of the spread. Consequences of this unknown and unprecedented virus with, as yet, no cure, have been far reaching with tens of thousands of deaths recorded. The virus does not discriminate between rich or poor, powerful or meek, east or west.

In the UK along with many other countries, social distancing measures have been introduced which have effectively put all but key workers such as NHS staff, in a state of lockdown. For how long, is still unclear as the UK government advises the country it is following the science and data on the effectiveness of the measures it has introduced. This is an especially challenging time for most people, but particularly those who are vulnerable either due to their age, mobility or underlying health conditions. Many, but not all, Ansar brothers fall into these categories so a key question is how to look after yourself during lockdown when you are restricted to an hour of exercise a day or can only leave the house for shopping, collecting medication or work but only if absolutely necessary.

There are many different forms of wellbeing and ways in which Ansar can look after themselves during these testing times. Firstly, in terms of mental wellbeing, as Ansar we should take the opportunity to keep our brains active. So, this could mean learning some short duas (prayers), memorizing small portions of the Holy Quran or solving numerical or verbal reasoning problems such as word searches and puzzles. It could also include doing cross words, putting together jigsaws or other activities that help to stimulate the faculties of the brain and keep it active. Next there are activities to strengthen our physical wellbeing. The most obvious form is partaking in some kind of exercise based on your capabilities. So, going for a daily walk or jog outside and the intake of fresh air helps with blood circulation and keeping muscles active. For those that are able, undertaking activities that increase the heart rate can be good for the body. For those unable to leave the house for whatever reason, there are still some light exercises that can be done to keep the mind and body active, even whilst sat down. For example, stretching of the arms, legs, torso and neck muscles in a controlled manner which can all help to maintain a healthy body. You know your body better thananyone else so you should not undertake any exercises that could lead to harm or discomfort. Any Ansar who have even more restricted movements can still benefit by undertaking various breathing exercises, taking in breaths of air through the nose, holding it for a few seconds and slowly exhaling through the mouth. Again, only those who are healthy enough to do these types of exercise should do so.

Another aspect which will help our physical

wellbeing is our diet. There are certain types of food that are high in salt, sugar, oil or fat that leave us feeling lethargic. Continuously eating these typesof food result in low energy, therefore, too tired or not motivated to do any form of exercise.

The last thing that will help with our physical wellbeing is to ensure we are getting enough sleep. During these times of lockdown when many schools and offices are closed, there may be a temptation for some to stay up late watching movies, surfing the internet and playing computer games. By sleeping late, one of the biggest downsides is that we may be unable to offer our Fajr prayers on time. So, we should make it a habit to sleep early and get at least 7 or 8 hours of sleep per night.

The third way in which we can look after ourselves is to take care of our social wellbeing. As human beings we are social animals therefore inclined to seek out and communicate with fellow human beings. Despite social distancing measures, we are still able to do this in a number of ways. First and foremost, we should make it a point to openly communicate with all members of our household. A great way to do this is to make sure we are dining together as families and interacting with our wives and children. Furthermore, we should inculcate the habit of praying together in congregation and offering the Jummah prayers from home where it is feasible to do so. These types of activities help to strengthen the social bond between families and promote a strong and cohesive family structure which is imperative in Islam. As Ansar and being the head of the family, it is incumbent on us to take care of all of those in our care. Here, the use of technology can be a great source of comfort to communicate with people regardless of where they are in the world. There are applications such as Skype, WhatsApp or Zoom which can easily help us to connect with our loved ones. On a more basic level, a simple phone call to family members or other members of the Jama'at to inquire into their wellbeing is also a huge satisfaction to those receiving the call. After all, as elders of the community, surely it is incumbent on us to not only look after our own wellbeing, but, to ascertain the wellbeing of other Ansar. Whether they are in need of medicines, food or have any other needs. In particular, we should identify those Ansar brothers who are living alone and make it our responsibility through the local Zaim to regularly check in on them.

Finally, and most importantly is taking care of our spiritual wellbeing. We have been reminded by Huzoor (aba) time and time again that now, more than ever, we should take the opportunity to pray and remember Allah. We have no idea how long and the extent to which this pandemic will go on so we should regularly pray for our loved ones, those affected by the virus, those working on the front line in the NHS to save lives and the most vulnerable members of our society. Most importantly however, we should remember and pray for Huzoor (aba) who continues to guide us through these testing times.

This lockdown provides a great opportunity for self-reflection, for us to improve our characters and to reconnect with our Creator. The remembrance of Allah is key to our success and the most important way in which we can look after our spiritual condition during this lockdown. So, from this we can conclude there are a number of things that we can do to look after ourselves whilst these restrictive measures are in place. May Allah the Almighty keep everyone safe and pray that the world is a better place when the world returns to a 'new normal'.

Taqwa

Translation of some verses of an Urdu poem by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad عليه السلام
the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.

We have the gift of God-fearing from that Beloved Not by our self but simply through the grace of God.	ہمیں اُس یار سے تقویٰ عطا ہے نہ یہ ہم سے کہ احسانِ خدا ہے
Strive hard to gain, if you are true and pure For this is the condition for seeing Him.	کرو کوشش اگر صدق و صفا ہے کہ یہ حاصِل ہو جو شرطِ لِقا ہے
This* is the mirror that displays the Creator This is the reality behind the sword of prayer	یہی آئینۂ خالق نما ہے یہی اِک جوہرِ سیفِ دُعا ہے
The root of all virtues is fearing God All is well if this root is preserved.	ہر اِک نیکی کی جڑ یہ اِتّقا ہے اگر یہ جڑ رہی سب کچھ رہا ہے
This is the pride and eminence of the saints Except for fearing God, what else do they have?	یہی اک فخر شانِ اولیاء ہے بجز تقویٰ زیادت اِن میں کیا ہے
Do fear, O friends, for He is a Watchful God If you ponder, this** is the place for recompense.	ڈرو یارو کہ وہ بِینا خدا ہے اگر سوچو، یہی دارُ الجزاء ہے
He has given this reward to me through God-fearing Holy is He Who has confounded my foes.	مجھے تقویٰ سے اُس نے یہ جزا دی فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِیْ اَخْزَی الْاَعَادِیْ
It is a wonderful gem, this thing called God-fearing He is blessed whose deed is fearing God.	عجب گوہر ہے جس کا نام تقویٰ مبارک وہ ہے جس کا کام تقویٰ
Hark! The fruit of Islam is God-fearing God's love is wine, God-fearing is the wine-cup.	سنو! ہے حاصلِ اسلام تقویٰ خدا کا عِشق مَے اور جام تقویٰ
O Muslims! Make your God-fearing perfect What faith is there if fearing God is weak.	مُسلمانو! بناؤ تام تقویٰ کہاں اِیماں اگر ہے خام تقویٰ
Thou hast bestowed this wealth upon me, O God Holy is He Who has confounded my foes.	یہ دَولت تو نے مجھ کو اے خدا دی فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِیْ اَخْزَی الْاَعَادِیْ

* Referring to the act of God-fearing.
** Meaning this world.

[Translated by Waheed Ahmad]



MAJALIS & REGIONAL ACTIVITY REPORTS

Local Ijtema - Nottingham Majlis





Nottingham Majlis had its annual Ijetma on 1st March 2020 at Bait ul Hafeez Mosque, Nottingham. This was very successful event with 70% (18 out of 26) of Ansar brothers attended the whole programme and participated in sports and academics competitions.

The process of informing and inviting Ansar brothers started immediately and several means of communication were used for this purpose. The ijtema flyer and programme was developed and circulated on Local Ansarullah social media group. Then we send invitation letters along a copy of program to each Nasir. Then phone calls were made.

The Ijtema day started with registration and breakfast at 10:00. We had opening session followed by sports competitions; included Darts, Table Tennis, Hit wicket, mini gold and musical chairs. All Ansar brothers enjoyed it a lot in an informal environment.

After sports, we had combined Zuhr and Asr prayed followed by lunch. The food was prepared in house and it was really nice and tasty. At 2:15pm we started our academics competitions, these included Tilawar, Nazam, Prepared English and Urdu speech and Chinese whisper.

We started concluding sesson at 4:30pm. Regional Nazim-e-Ala sb chaired this session. Nazim Ala Ijtema presented a brief Ijtema report followed by prize distribution and a concluding speech.

Tarbiyyat Forum - Fazl Region

Fazl region successfully held a Trabiyyat Forum for Muntazemeen and members of Salat Committee on 24th February 2020 at Mahmood Hall, Fazl Mosque, London. This Forum was attended by 150 members. The activities started with the recitation of the Holy Quran followed by Urdu & English translation. Afterwards a poem of Promised Messiah[as] was rendered. Respected Qaid Tarbiyyat Fazl Ur Reman sb highlighted the various roles and activities of the members from Tarbiyyat viewpoints. A presentation on Tarbiyyati data was also given and importance of Wasiyyat was explained. Afterwards an open question and answer sessions was held. After the Isha Prayer dinner was served among the participants.







MAJALIS & REGIONAL ACTIVITY REPORTS

Tarbiyyat Forum - Bashir Region

Bashir Region successfully held a Tarbiyat meeting in Sar-e-Ansar for all Muntazmeen Tarbiyyat on Wednesday, 11th March 2020. The discussion included topics of holding regular Salat Committee meeting, making frequent House visit, collecting report, importance of listening Friday Sermon and holding of Tarbiyyat Forum.



Salat Committee Meeting – Fazl Region

Fazl Region successfully held its monthly Salat Committee Meeting on 30th January at Sara-e-Ansar. The meeting was chaired by Naib Qaid Tarbiyyat. Mr Mansoor Ahmed sb advised everyone to offer salat in congregation and presented an extract of Huzoor-e-Anwar regarding congregational prayer. He also advised all Ansar brothers to try their best to be part of the blessed scheme of Nizam-e-Wasiyyat. The total attendance was 16 and all majalis of Fazl region were represented in this meeting.





Tarbiyyat Forum - Majlis Tooting

A Tarbiyat Forum was organised by Majlis Tooting at Bilal Centre on 8th March after Maghrib Prayer. Fifty participants including Ansar with family attended this Forum. Respected Hafiz Tayab Sahib (Naib Qaid Tarbiyat) and Respected Haris Sahib (Naib Qaid Tarbiyat) attended the Forum as special guests from Markaz and gave valuable guidance in respect of various Tarbiyyati matters.





Quran Exhibition – Majlis Mitcham

Majlis Mitcham organised a Quran Exhibition and Tabligh Stall in St Boniface Main Hall. 31 guests visited this exhibition and benefitted from this activity.



Quran Exhibition at Welsh Assembly
Wales & South West Region

A very successful Quran Exhibition was held at the Welsh Assembly by Wales & South West Region. The local mayor and Assembly members, including Rt.Hon. Muhammad Asghar attended this event. Children from three different local schools also attended with their teachers.



Over 300 members of the public attended this exhibition. Around 40 books each of "Life of Muhammed" and "Pathway to PEACE" were gifted. The event also had good coverage on the social media.



Tabligh Training Workshop – Majlis Walton on Thames

Majlis Ansarullah Walton on Thames organised a training workshop on 23rd January. The event started with Tilawat and Ansar Pledge. Mashhood Butt sb narrated some of his personal Tabligh experiences. 10 members attended this event.



Tabligh Exhibition - Majlis Worcester Park

Majlis Worcester Park held a successful exhibition at Cobham Cobham library from 29th January till 9th February. Around 150 guests benefitted from this activity.



Qura'an Exhibition -Majlis Raynes Park

Majlis Raynes Park organised an exhibition on the topic of PEACE for a week starting 24th February. Around 70 guests benefitted from this activity.



Tabligh Forum – Majlis Raynes Park

A forum was held on 16th February to discuss the topic of "leaflet campaign" and particiapts were encouraged to participate this blessed scheme.



Tabligh Day – West Midland Region

West Midlands Region held a very successful Tabligh day in Birmingham City Centre.

Total participants: 32, Majalis present: 6 out of 7

On the day a total of 15 Tabligh stalls were organised at various locations in the region. A very special incident happened during the event; a British man kissed the leaflet which bore a picture of the Promised Messiah[as] and appreciated our efforts in such a cold weather.





Tabligh meeting – West Midland Region

West midlands started monthly meetings with all regional muntazameen-e-tabligh to motivate and continue reminding our role and responsibilities.



Quran Quiz by Qiadat Talim-ul-Quran

By the grace of Allah Almighty Talim-ul-Quran department of Majlis Ansar Ullah UK organised a National Quran Quiz on 15th of December 2019 at Baitul Ehsan Mosque in Carshalton. The program started with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Murabbi Mehmood Wardi sb. The Quiz competition was based on the Tafseer of Surah Al-Fatiha written by The Promised Messiah[as].



13 teams from 11 regions participated in this event. The names of these regions are Bait-ul-Futuh region, Masroor region, Bashir region, Fazal region, Nasir region, Baitul Ehsan region, South region, 3 teams from Tahir region, West Midlands region, North east region and Muqami region.

1st Position : **Masroor region & Fazal region**

2nd Position: **Muqami region**

3rd Position: **West Midlands & Bait-ul-Futuh regions**

The Quiz program was concluded by silent prayer lead by Mohtram Fazal A Tahir sahib. Food was served at the end. May Allah enable us to organize more of these events to enhance the knowledge and understanding of The Holy Quran. Ameen.



Regional Ijtema - Baitul Futuh



Baitul Futuh Region held its Regional Ijtema on Sunday 8th March 2020 in Tahir Hall, Baitul Futuh Mosque. Ijtema started with congregational Tahajjud followed by Fajr prayer.



After registration and breakfast, first session was chaired by Naib Sadr Majlis (Zia ul Rehman sb). Simultaneously academic and sports competitions were held. Academic competitions were held in mosque while sports competions were held in Tahir Hall.

Final session started before Zuhr. Sadr Majlis, Dr Ch. Ijaz Ur Rehman Sahib was the chair of the session. He distributed prizes to academic and sports position holders. In concluding address, Sadr sb mentioned about the ongoing Corona virus and precautions to stop spread of this disease. He congratulated Baitul Futuh Region for conducting a successful Ijtema. 152 members attended the Ijtema.





